

Clearly there are hundreds of thousands of individuals around this country, not just in the Washington metropolitan area, very anxious this evening, very anxious as to what they are supposed to do tomorrow morning, show up for work and are they going to stay at work, are they going to get paid, are they going to have money to pay their mortgage payments, are they going to have money to pay their car payments and their children's tuition in college.

This is a very critical matter. I understand there are differences of agreement, but I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that, in fact, we do get word very quickly as to how we are going to proceed to try to avert the shutdown of the Federal Government and the incurring of very substantial costs tomorrow and the days thereafter by this impasse.

APPOINTMENT OF ADDITIONAL CONFEREES ON H.R. 2491, SEVEN-YEAR BALANCED BUDGET RECONCILIATION ACT OF 1996

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, under the authority granted in clause 6 of rule X, the Speaker appoints as additional conferees from the Committee on Commerce for consideration of title XVI of the House bill, and subtitle B of title VII of the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Mr. BRYANT of Texas and Mr. TOWNS.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will notify the Senate of the change in conferees.

PROTECTING HEALTH CARE FOR RETIRED COAL MINERS

(Mr. POSHARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POSHARD. Mr. Speaker, over the weekend the so-called Hancock amendment was taken out of the budget reconciliation bill.

This provision would have put at risk the health care coverage of some 100,000 retired coal miners and their families, including several thousand people who live in the coalfields of Illinois.

I appreciate the action taken by the budget negotiators and encourage them to resist any further efforts to change the 1992 Coal Act or disrupt the balanced approach now in place to care for these miners.

The men and women who have worked years to fuel the economy of this Nation do not need their health care coverage put at risk. I appreciate the bipartisan effort which went into putting this law in place and the bipartisan effort which continues today to keep it in place.

In this vein, let me take just a minute to encourage my colleagues in Congress and in the administration to put the same kind of effort into finding

middle ground and solving our budget crisis.

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NOTIFY FEDERAL EMPLOYEES OF THEIR STATUS

(Mr. MORAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, there are nearly a million people around the country who do not know tonight whether they should come in to work tomorrow who have been deemed non-essential, whatever that means. We owe it to them, if we cannot take appropriate action tonight, to enable them to go to work tomorrow to at least let them know.

It is the height of absurdity to bring 800,000 people to work tomorrow and then to have to tell them because the Congress did not take action the night before, that they have to turn around and go home. We ourselves do not even know whether our own employees should be coming to work tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, I would strongly urge the majority, the leadership of this body, to at least let those million Federal employees and the many millions who are dependent upon Federal activities throughout this country to know what the state of affairs is tomorrow, and we, as well, need to have some appropriate policy with regard to our own employees.

It is unfair to have them come in to work tomorrow and then tell them we have decided they are not essential and that they will no longer be paid.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KOLBE). Without prejudice to the resumption of business at a future time this evening, and under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members are recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. OLVER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. OLVER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

OPPOSING THE ELIMINATION OF MILK MARKETING ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. ENGLISH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, reconciliation conferees, I would like to commend the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON], the gentleman from New York [Mr. PAXON], and the

gentleman from New York [Mr. MCHUGH] for their intrusive, decisive, and successful effort to block a provision of the House-passed 7-year Balanced Budget Reconciliation Act that I believe would have unfairly disrupted the livelihoods of our Nation's dairy farmers.

Reconciliation contained a provision entitled "freedom to milk," which legislates the dismantling of the milk marketing orders. This proposal would deregulate the current system by terminating the price support program effective January 21, 1996.

After speaking with dairy farmers from western Pennsylvania, I can assure you that this would be devastating to the industry. According to a recent Mid-Atlantic Dairyman's Inc. analysis of a Food and Agriculture Policy Institute study, net returns to dairy producers would be projected to go down 65 percent in the first year of deregulation and down 43 percent per year on the average for the first 3 years.

Furthermore, under freedom to milk, Pennsylvania dairy farmers are expected to lose over \$150 million. Low farm milk prices and limited availability of credit, coupled with the fact that our GATT partners can still subsidize their dairy farmers, means that the freedom to farm provision is more than scary. For the small dairy farmer in my district, it is fatal.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the present system was not haphazardly scrapped. It has continued to evolve to reflect the needs of the market and consumers. The U.S. dairy industry is one of the most efficient market-oriented dairy industries in the world, and the program which manages this industry costs the Government less than \$70 million each year.

Furthermore, dairy farmers recognize that once again it is time to reform the system, but let us do it constructively.

Why do we not consolidate the orders through the Department of Agriculture's hearing process, simplify the system, and ensure that the small dairy farmer still has input into future reform? Unfortunately, there are still proposals out there to meet the budgetary caps that unfairly tax the dairy farmer, a new 10-cent assessment on top of the existing assessments.

The purpose of agricultural reform and the objective of the reconciliation process is to reduce taxpayer support of farm programs. A new assessment on dairy producers is nothing more than a direct tax upon every dairy farmer in America.

Mr. Speaker, in my view, the appropriate approach is to realize savings through the price support program currently in place. Such a reduction would realize budgetary savings at no expense under current milk prices for all products to the farmers. At the present time, nonfat dry milk is still being marketed at 6 cents over the support price while butter and cheese are currently 35 percent over support levels.